

583 certain relatives. According to Shaw these represent the conventional payment which is made without question or discussion. (1) They are the basic minimum required if the marriage is to be concluded. One or two at a time are transferred over a period of about two years.

2. The *sho* is *keny*: additional cattle, the number of which is determined after lengthy negotiations between the husband's people and the wife's people. They average about 5 to 7. A number of goats are also handed over. If the two families are very friendly the transfer of the last animal may be postponed until the marriage of a daughter of the union. (2)

The father of the bride gets the bulk of the animals, most of which will be used as bridewealth for the marriages of his sons. The bride's maternal uncle gets a heifer and, according to Shaw, her paternal uncle gets a bull and heifer. (3) Usually the bride's family make some return gifts to the bridegroom's people, amounting to at least three head of cattle.

• 586 If there is a divorce the husband can demand the return of the cattle with their progeny. Usually every effort is made to avoid repaying bridewealth and the wife is often replaced by a sister or cousin. If two children have been born no bridewealth cattle would be returned if the wife died or left her husband; if there were only one child the bridewealth would be returned but two or three beasts would be retained.

Marriage Ceremonies

583 According to Evans-Pritchard, there are two forms of marriage: *por* and *neko*. (4) *por* is marriage by elopement, and is regarded as shameful. Usually the girl's parents accept the situation and the union is regularised by the acceptance of some cattle - but fewer than is normal. *Neko* is the correct and usual form of marriage; a long chain of events intervenes between the time of obtaining the parents' permission to marry, and the marriage itself. It takes several months to complete a marriage, sometimes several years, according to the individual family circumstances. (5)

585 When the parents on both sides agree to the proposal of marriage, there follows the ceremonial capture of the bride - the *neko nyoko*. A mimic fight occurs between the bride's people and the bridegroom's party, and the bride resists to show that she is not eloping. She goes to the bridegroom's village and is deflowered in the presence of witnesses. She is given a girdle with a tail (*cieno*) which she wears as a sign of her new status.

The *diero* and *lupo* ceremonies take place within a few weeks and are followed by the *danko* party, which consists of a visit to the bride's parents and the paying of respects to her mother. There is feasting, singing and drinking through the night, and a few days later the bride returns to her parents' home. The bride now spends part of her time with

(1) Shaw, *JEA* 1932, Nos. 45-6, p. 45.

(2) Evans-Pritchard, *Africa*, XX, 1950, p. 139.

(3) Shaw, *op. cit.*

(4) Evans-Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

(5) Shaw, *op. cit.*

583

brothers. The bride's maternal uncle generally gets a heifer, the *aller gwa*, the cow of the sister's daughter, but it is not, I think, regarded as being part of the bridewealth and the payment in no way concerns the father of the bride. It is given to the maternal uncle in return for gifts, may be a man, some chickens, and some eleusine, and for hospitality to the husband; for a well-disposed maternal uncle invites him to his home. The uncle has no legal right to the heifer. The Luo say that the *aw* is only an *aw*, the maternal uncle is only an in-law (of the father of the bride).

The last of the animals to be paid seems to be the *ma* rings, the ox of the meat, to which I have earlier referred. It is also called *awale* and by other names. This ox is sometimes not paid till several years after the bride has been through the final rites of marriage. The husband's people drive it to the mother-in-law's home, arriving very early in the morning before the people are up, and they take the further precaution of severing the tendon of one of its legs as they drive it into the kraal, so that the young men of the home cannot seize it and add it to their herd. It is meat for the mother and not an ox for the herd of her husband and sons. It is then killed in front of the mother's hut. The wife's parents probably make the husband's party a return present of a sheep. They eat part of it in the home of the wife's parents and take the rest of the meat back with them to their own people.

It should be noted that the bride's family have to make return gifts to the husband's people and that these are also called *awale*. Some of the gifts are animals slaughtered during the marriage rites, but it seems that they also have to pay one or two other beasts at various times to the husband's people. I was told that they hand over at least three head of cattle altogether, or as many as five if they are rich, including those killed for meat during the ceremonies. This is a point that invites further inquiry.

586

Everything paid by the husband's people to the wife's family counts as bridewealth and should there be a divorce the husband can demand their return, together with the progeny of the animals of the bridewealth. However, Luo regard divorce as a grave misfortune, and if the breach is occasioned by the wife's misbehaviour or is due to her running away from her husband, her parents make every effort to maintain the alliance they have entered into with the husband's people by replacing her by a sister or cousin. Also, if a wife dies the return of her bridewealth is regarded as a last and most undesirable resort. Instead, her parents try to replace her by a sister or cousin. This is known as *apanga alanga*, the filling of the basket. The husband may have to wait many years before he gets his new wife. He has to go through the full ceremonies of marriage with her and to pay bridewealth, though only a few cows, perhaps five or six. More are asked for if the replacement is from a different family. In the event of the bridewealth being returned, two or three head of cattle, according to the circumstances of the case and the sex of the child, are retained by the wife's people for any child she bore her husband, the child remaining with him. I believe that after the birth of a second child no cattle would be returned. However, even when a wife dies leaving several children behind her, her parents try to give the husband a relative in her place to keep up the alliance.

Or last

587

When a marriage has been completed, that is to say after a child has been born, it is regarded by Luo as a union which should not in any circumstances be broken. If the

village is a long way off the girl's relations sleep at his village, but if they can 585
manage to do so they return the same day. Next day the bridegroom's brothers
and his other wives take the bride back to her father's village and there is a great
feast and *tembo* drink; the bridegroom does not go.

The father of the girl next day presents his daughter with a goat and she 583
returns to her husband. The girl's husband then continues to make payments to 585
his father-in-law; the total amount it is necessary to pay varies from two to six
cows; if he stops paying his wife will go off to her father's village and stay there
for a month or so until the man resumes payments. Before the big attack of
cattle plague in 1890 and 1891 it is said that as many as forty cows were
sometimes paid for a wife.

If a woman does not bear her husband a child quickly the husband stops his 583
payments, but the husband has no claim for the return of any of the property as 587
long as the woman stays with him. If a wife dies and has borne no children the
property is returned, or one of her sisters is given the man to wife and the man
only pays about twenty goats for the sister.

If a woman will not stop with her husband she is married to some 586
one else, and the first husband is repaid from what the second husband pays.
If a woman has a child and is ill-treated she can leave her husband but
the child belongs to him; if the child be a boy, when it grows up and the
mother grows old she will generally come back to live with her son. If 583
after a marriage has been arranged a father is loth to part with his
daughter the young man employs his friends to waylay the girl in the daytime.
If the girl however refuses to stay at her suitor's village and runs away, the
property paid over is returned without delay and the match is broken off.
If a woman remains unmarried for a longer period than usual she often goes
off to a chief or someone with plenty of cattle and states that she intends to [622
stay there and cook for him; in such a case she is usually taken to wife, but the 595]
man pays much less than is nominally customary. Chiefs have from ten to forty
wives. They are generally speaking very moral in their domestic relations. [582]
They do not intermarry in the same clan, but a man will marry the daughter
of a man named the same as himself.

Pottery.—All pottery is made by women and is similar to that of the Bantu 323
Kavirondo, and consists of water pots, cooking pots, *tembo* pots, etc.

Dyes; tanning.—These people do not use dyes, neither do they tan, but they 281
soften skins by rubbing in fat and hand-working till soft. 386

Arms, etc.—Their shields were formerly made of buffalo hide but are now 411
made of cow hide; the shields are usually very large, curving round the body of
the man carrying it. They also make shields of ambatch wood (called *Orindi*).
They have a great fancy for spears with shafts of enormous length, ten feet
or more; the heads are very small and insignificant. Use *simés* and clubs to a
small extent; the former weapons are however I think copied from the Masai
or Nandi. Also use bows and arrows; the arrows were formerly poisoned, but

When the *dho golo onyimbo* had been paid the bull and the heifer—the *dho dier*—chosen by the bride's brothers after the mock battle outside the bridegroom's *dala* were sent over by the bridegroom. If, after the *dho dier* had been received, the marriage was broken off by the bridegroom he had to pay compensation to the bride's father for the meat and beer consumed at the feast of the *tero nyako*, and he was also bound to pay one bull for the loss of the girl's virginity. Even if the girl, or her father refused the marriage at this stage, the bridegroom was still bound to pay this bull.

With the payment of the *dho dier* what may be regarded as the ceremonies of the betrothal were completed, and the marriage process entered on a new stage.

The stage was marked by various presents of cattle made by the bridegroom to certain of his future relatives. He gave a number (sometimes as many as fifteen) known as the *dho ikeny*, to the bride's full brothers. If she had no brothers the *dho ikeny* passed into the possession of her mother who might, if she wished, allow them to be used in the payment of bride-price for one of her husband's sons by another wife. (In this case the young wife was expected to treat her step-mother-in-law as she would treat her own husband's mother, and to help her in the fields and the home.)

In addition to the *dho ikeny*, the bridegroom sent a bull and a heifer (the *dher wuon nyako*) to the bride's father, and another bull and heifer (the *dho jochiemo*) to her uncles on the father's side.

Finally a cow and a calf (the *dher min nyako*) were sent to the bride's mother. These, with their offspring, became her absolute property. She could, if she chose, use them to contribute towards the payment of bride price for her sons, or equally could refuse to allow them to be used in this way. After her death they were inherited by her youngest son.

When all these had been handed over, and it should be noted that they were, apparently, conventional payments, made without question or discussion so long as they were within the means of the parties concerned, like our own engagement rings and wedding presents, then the discussions began about the number of cattle to be paid over in return for the transfer of the girl from one family to another—the true bride price itself. I believe that in some parts the number to be paid over was settled by discussion between the heads of the two families before the girl had been ceremonially captured. But the elders at Nyahera told me that there the custom was that the bridegroom conducted the discussion with the bride's father himself at this much later point.

He went over himself to the bride's *dala*, accompanied by his brothers and friends to the number of fifteen or sixteen, and taking

562 and possibly was invented to keep women in subjection. It has only partly succeeded. Something more potent than a creation story is required to keep many of the LUO women down. Two illustrations suffice to show this. The first in Church. The collection is being taken up, and a man finds himself without any cash. He crosses over to the women's side, whispers a few words to his wife, whereupon she gives him a cent for the collection. Like many a wife in other lands, she holds the purse strings. The second the Law Court. [593] A wife pleads for a divorce from her husband on the ground that he has become a polygamist. She gets her divorce.

584 Much of the apparent inequality is only apparent, not real. The thing which, more than any other, has been quoted as showing the inferior position accorded to women, is the manner in which girls are given in marriage. But this is not as much a matter of sex as of age. If it be true that girls are sometimes given in marriage without their wishes being consulted in the matter, it is also true that many a young man is provided with a wife without his wishes being consulted either. Not so long ago I asked a man what the girl to whom he was engaged was like. He replied that he had never seen her, that the marriage had been arranged by his father. This kind of thing is quite common. And it must not be forgotten that the girl's mother is taken into the fullest consultation when the question of her daughter's betrothal is raised. It is not decided by the men only. And generally there is some form of consultation with the girl. Long and bitter experience has taught the community that to force some girls beyond a certain point is only to lay up trouble for the future. Only three weeks ago a father came to me to ask me to try to mediate in his daughter's affairs. She had been betrothed when quite a young child to a man old enough to be her aged father. He had in due course taken her to wife, and there were two children by the union. 586 Then she left him and consorted with another man, more nearly her own age. I saw the woman, went into the matter and found that the old man was so uncongenial to her, that even the fact that she had born him two children was not strong enough to reconcile her to her lot. She had much of my sympathy, though I could not condone the desertion of her children.

581 Not even the very strongest bonds can bind a woman who wishes to break them. The most binding form of betrothal known to the LUO, is that which is the outcome of an alliance between two families. The Luo have a proverb which runs "Osiep otho, to wat okotho." In English it would run "friendship dies, but relationship does not die." So, as in other lands, the heads of two Luo families may desire to cement their friendship by ties of intermarriage. A feast is provided by one of the parties, generally by the one taking the initiative in

and secures a large following, and thus becomes a powerful chief.

554

Petty thefts from houses are dealt with by a medicine-man who discovers the culprit. He goes to the village in which the suspected person lives, takes an ordinary stool, sets it in an open space in the village, fills the hollow of the seat with water and covers it with an inverted cooking-pot. Having done this he goes through a formula mentioning the names of the families of the village, and at length mentions the names of the suspected family individually, until at last he names the person accused. When the name of the guilty person is mentioned, the water on the stool is said to flow from under the pot. The person thus convicted is fined and, in addition to his fine, he is compelled to restore the full amount of property he has stolen.

685

791

787

Adultery. When a man is accused of adultery, he is tried and, if found guilty, is fined an ox which is given to the injured man. An unfaithful wife, who leaves her husband, may be restored to him and he will not think the worse of her. Should she refuse to return to her husband, her father must either supply the husband with another wife, a sister of his former wife, or restore the marriage-fee. Unmarried women are given great license and are not considered guilty of an immoral action when they have sexual relations before marriage.

684

837

586

836

Murder. A murderer is discovered by means of the oracle. A medicine-man is asked to discover the murderer and, when he names the person, the relatives of the murdered man accuse the murderer. The accused is ordered to bring his son, and the medicine-man, after making incantations over a pot of drugs, gives the boy a cup of it to drink. If the father is guilty, the son will die at once; whereas, if he is innocent, the boy will suffer no harm. When a man is proved to be guilty or acknowledges his guilt, he is fined a number of cows and has to give his daughter or sister to the father of the murdered man. A murderer seldom seeks safety by flight when he has committed his deed, and often confesses his guilt without any trial, avowing the motives of his act. There is a special ceremony to purify a murderer. He is first separated from the members

787

695

682

783

282

THE NILOTIC KAVIRONDO

[PT. VI]

When A MAN MARRIES

591 a second or third wife, he may select another place for his new wife, either in the village near his former wife, or he may elect to take her to some other village. A man who has wives dwelling in different places lives with them in turn. Married women are careful in regard to their relations with men. Should a woman be lax in her behaviour or encourage men to visit her, her husband will send her back to her parents and divorce her.

842

595

A wife who is proved to be sterile is not divorced, but her parents send her sister to become the man's wife, and he is expected to pay another sum as a marriage-fee for her; but there is no stated time when the sum shall be paid after the woman goes to live with him. The former wife continues to live with him as his wife.

291

Distinctive dress of married women. Each woman after marriage makes a girdle with a long fringe at the back and ties the ends together, which gives it the appearance of a tail. The girdle is worn constantly during the husband's life-time, but, should he die, she takes it off and puts it on the house-roof over the door during the season of mourning to show that she is a widow and is mourning.

[765]

304

After marriage a wife scarifies her sides and back in addition to the scarifications she made at puberty. When a woman has a son born, she makes a clay-mound in the middle of the floor in her house for the food pot to rest on when the family are at meals.

352

852

Birth customs. A wife who expects her confinement calls in an elderly woman to act as midwife. This woman is a person who has had experience in such matters and is herself a mother. When the child is born, the midwife cuts the umbilical cord on an axe handle if the child is a boy, and on a hoe handle if it is a girl. The placenta of a boy is buried outside on the right side of the doorway and that of a girl on the left side. During the first three days the father remains near the house in which his wife and child lie, but the midwife alone enters and attends to the wants of the mother and child. On the third day the father takes a fowl and rubs it on the child's chest and turns it loose, when it becomes the property of the child. When the new moon appears, the parents bathe, and

844

846

273 Both sexes drink the *beer* which is made from grain, but the women
234 never drink with the men. The women make the *butter*.

The men do not *smelt iron*, but obtain it in pig form from the Bantu
326 Kavirondo. There is even a certain prejudice against *blacksmiths* amongst
439 the Ja-luo. They are called "Yothethh," and among some of the tribes
[564] constitute a separate caste called "Uvino." They *forge* spears, knives,
bill-hooks, and axes, but their hoes are imported from their Bantu
411 neighbours. *Shields* are made of buffalo or ox hide, and also of *ambat.h*
wood. Their *spears* have small heads, and shafts of tremendous length.
They use *clubs*, and also long leaf-shaped swords, which they have
borrowed from the Masai or Nandi. Bows and arrows are still employed,
278 but the arrows are no longer poisoned. Poison was said to be derived
534 from the venom of snakes, and also from certain herbs. Their musical
instruments are very similar to those of the Kavirondo Bantu.

Girls are betrothed at the age of seven, and go to their husbands
583 at the age of ten or eleven, payment being made by degrees over the
584 years elapsing between the betrothal and the *marriage*. The girl is taken
585 by her unmarried girl companions to her husband's house. The father of
the girl kills an ox and takes the meat, together with a quantity of
sorghum porridge, to the bridegroom's house to provide a *wedding feast*.
On the following day the bridegroom's brothers, and his other wives, if he
has any, take the newly wedded wife back to her father's village, where
there is another great feast. The bridegroom does not attend. The father
of the girl next day presents his daughter with a goat, and she returns to
her husband, who continues to make payments to his father-in-law. The
total amount of the marriage payment may reach to six cows, or their
equivalent. If the man stops paying, his wife will leave him and go back
to her father's village until the payments are resumed. If within a year
of the marriage the woman does not bear a child, the husband may stop
his payments, but he has no claim to the return of what has been already
paid, so long as his wife remains with him. If a wife dies without having
587 borne children, the amount paid for her is returned, unless the husband
agrees to accept one of his *deceased wife's sisters*, for whom only a
small complimentary present is paid. If a woman refuses to stop with
her husband, she is given to another man, and whatever this man
● 586 gives for her is paid over to her first husband. If a woman has a child
and is ill-treated, she may leave her husband, but must leave her child
behind with the father. If the child be a boy, when he grows up and
the mother gets old she generally returns to live with her son. If after
583 a marriage has been arranged an avaricious father is loth to part with his
daughter, the young man employs his friends to waylay the girl in the
daytime. If, however, the girl after capture refuses to stop with her

THE FAMILY

23

to his home and continue to live in the *simba*, the bride not cooking on her own, but in the veranda of her mother-in-law's hut, and her food not being eaten by her husband (who continues to eat his mother's food) but only by the young men. Later still the ceremony of *rise* is performed, which is considered a final confirmation of the marriage contract by the two families. However, further ceremonies follow, in which the husband gives his father-in-law the bull of *aliech* and his mother-in-law the goat of *aum thunda*. Then the father-in-law settles upon his daughter the heifer of *ataka*, a bull, two goats, and a hoe, in token that he now gives up all claim upon his daughter as long as the marriage continues. Eventually husband and wife move out of the *simba* into a new hut built for her by him, and she begins to cook on her own and he to eat her food. The sequence of ceremonies associated with marriage is thus complicated and protracted. There is no specified time schedule, but the bride may have given birth several times before they are concluded.

Less prestige attaches to the form of marriage contracted by a man and woman without prior formal approval from their respective families. This occurred in the past if a girl was made pregnant in the *simba* and was sent straight to her lover, or on the elopement of a married woman with her adulterer, or on the remarriage of a divorced woman. This type of marriage is becoming very common today, when adherence to traditional ritual is lax, and when the young are able with impunity to short-cut both the tedious formalities and the great expenses of the most approved form of marriage. In this form of marriage cattle are still claimed by the bride's father, or by the former husband in the case of divorce and remarriage, but they are fewer in number. The essential differences from the first type of marriage are that the bride loses her virginity before any sort of marriage negotiation has taken place between the two families, and the contract eventually made between them is a recognition of a *fait accompli* instead of the careful planning of a mutually approved match.

A dead man's widows are normally taken up by his kinsmen at the final ceremonies of the funeral, a year or more after the death. These kinsmen are nearly always husband's brothers or stepsons to the widows and they would certainly never be kinsmen from outside the dead man's minimal class A lineage; but the Luo do not consciously relate the matter of widow inheritance to a specific grade of lineage. Among their husband's close kinsmen widows are allowed considerable freedom of choice. It was considered desirable that a man should replace a wife who had died, or a wife who was barren, by a sister of hers, which he could usually do for an amount of bridewealth far smaller than that of the original marriage. Ritual offences rather than infidelities were considered grounds for divorce. If the wife was judged guilty the husband claimed back the bridewealth cattle, less deductions of one head for the wife's work during the marriage, two for each girl, and three for each boy born of it, and others to replace those consumed in the marriage ceremonies. But if the husband was at fault he might be prevented from claiming any cattle back by a brother demanding the woman in his stead.

As has been stated, the cattle of a homestead are all herded together, but there are clearly recognized divisions in the ownership of the herd. There are three main categories: the cattle owned by the father, the cattle owned by his wives, and the cattle held in trust by them for the marriages of their sons. Though the father cannot interfere with the two latter categories except by agreement, he is regarded none the

585

583

[554]

[178]

587

586

422

African Homicide and Suicide

583 injured and not infrequently death results. Indigenously the
 682 method of resolving this situation is to cancel the arrangements of the wedding which was to have taken place and to continue these arrangements to marry a girl to the dead man. If the dead man is from the party of the prospective groom, the girl is married to his name. If the death has occurred among the relatives or friends of the girl, then a bride is chosen from the relatives of her prospective husband to marry in the name of the dead man. Whenever possible, this custom is followed today. The authorities, however, naturally prosecute in cases of this kind. The result is usually manslaughter, and the sentence is a light one.

682 There are cases in which it is difficult to determine whether the death was caused intentionally or accidentally. For example: a food which is now becoming increasingly used is the cassava root, and raw cassava contains cyanogenic glucoside
 [262] which, when acidified by gastric fluid, forms hydrogen cyanide and is therefore a virulent poison in this form. Adequate cooking destroys this poisonous principle, and most Luo women clearly understand this. Therefore, when the death occurred of a child who had consumed cassava which had been prepared and given by a co-wife, its mother's suspicion was immediately aroused. She accused the co-wife of giving the poison intentionally. It is very difficult, however, to prove, as in the case mentioned, that death was caused intentionally and not accidentally by the ignorance of the co-wife. The case was dismissed by the court.

● 586 The sequel, however, was that the husband did not accept the explanation of ignorance and divorced the woman because, as he stated, "there would never be peace in my village. It is obvious what this witch has done and although she has been a good wife to me, she has broken my village and killed my child. I therefore will divorce her and get my cattle back to marry some woman who is not a witch."

Homicide and Suicide among the Joluo of Kenya

wanted the best of two worlds. Traditionally, elopement (*por*) is justified and is legal, albeit more difficult in cases of *nyar kiseke*, providing that the young man has stated his willingness to pay bride-wealth and has been refused. Moreover, it is the last remaining traditional way by which a young woman, forced to marry against her will, is able to break the arrangement. Today, however, because there are so many illegal unions, the African courts take a serious view of young men and women running off to the towns without the slightest intention of paying bride-wealth.

159
762
584
684

While Okare and his brother were retained in gaol, pending the case, the girl's father and her brothers went to Nairobi, where they found the girl after some difficulty and took her back to her village by force. There they married her to Opala and he, with two of her brothers, took her by force to the place of his employment which was in another territory nearly 700 miles away.

Opio, who was an influential man in his district, then proceeded with the case against Okare and his brother. The Court decided in favor of Opio, ordered compensation for the expenses he had incurred securing the return of his daughter. Okare and his brother were heavily fined for having taken the girl from the protection of her father. The compensation and the fine amounted to a very large sum of money and the boy appealed to the District Officer's Court. Pending the Appeal, he went to search for new employment at Nairobi. Akech, in the meantime, had arrived at the home of her husband in the far away city, only to find that he was already married and that his first wife, as a Christian, refused to have her in her home. Quarrels and arguments began in earnest, with the result that Opala had no alternative but to send the girl back to her father and to demand a divorce. Akech, however, did not go home but returned to Nairobi to Okare.

762
159
684

[584] •

The father heard what had happened and, in the shame and humiliation, hanged himself in a classroom at the school

762
159

MARRIED LIFE

65

Childless marriages. Failure to have a child is a great disaster in the home. The idea of the perpetuation of their kind is so deeply rooted in the minds of the Luo people that a childless marriage generally culminates in the breaking up of the home concerned, the husband usually being advised by his relatives to marry a second wife. Although results may prove that it is the husband who is defective, priority is always given to men to prove their fecundity. Thus a woman is forbidden by the social conventions to attempt to prove on her own initiative that she can give birth to children. 842 [586]

If through the second marriage the husband is proved to be sterile, his wives may one by one desert him. On the other hand, this great desire for children may lead him to carry on his name through the secret offices of the woman's brothers-in-law. Otherwise he must face the inevitable fate of having his family broken up. [586]

Women's diet after birth. For the first week after childbirth, the mother's food is limited to gruel, fish, and green vegetables. 'Bo', which is one of the vegetable pulses, is excluded on account of the trouble it gives to the stomach. During this early period meat is not eaten because most women complain that it makes the stomach tight. Hard food, such as boiled maize, is also avoided at this time. Although tea and coffee are occasionally drunk by the more fortunate families, the drink which pleases women most at this time is gruel. They are allowed to take a lot of it as people believe that it helps in the formation of the milk which is so important for feeding the new baby. 846 262 [272] [853]

The period of this considered treatment is brief, lasting for about a month at the most. Much depends on the economic resources of the family concerned, and the poorer the family is, the shorter is the time that careful attention can be given.